

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----002566 231242Z /10

O P 231144Z DEC 77
FM USMISSION USBERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5922
AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
473#.9/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 9981
USMISSION USNATO
CINCEUR
CINCUSAFE
CINCUSAREUR
USNMR SHAPE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 USBERLIN 3228

EXDIS --MILITARY ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O.11652: XGDS-3
TAGSC PGOV, MILI BWG, AKB
SUBJECT: RUMORS OF GDR RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS TO EAST BERLIN

REF: (A) BONN 21170 DTG 221618Z DEC 77, (B) USBERLIN 3209 DTG
221212Z DEC 77, (C) BERLIN 9234 DTG 201519Z DEC 77, (D) SEMLER/
WHITLOCK TELCON

SUMMARY: WHILE CHANCES OF ANY GDR ACTION AT CHEKPOINTS
OVER HOLIDAY PERIOD SEEM MORE UNLIKELY THAN EVER IN
VIEW OF WHAT SOVIET XVVXMM FIRST SECRETARY TYUTYUNOV TOLE
FRENCH POLAD PERRIN DECEMBER 22, BERLIN MISSIONS CONSIDERED
SOME COUNTERMEASURES FOR CONTINGENCY USE AT DECEMBER 22
MEETINGS. SINCE FRENCH AND BRITISH BOTH PLAN TO SEND
FLAG TOURS ON NEW YEAR'S EVE TO TEST ACCESS, USCOB
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HAS DECIDED THERE IS NO RPT NO NEED FOR U.S. FLAG
TOUR AS WELL AND NONE IS SCHEDULED. END SUMMARY.

1. WE UNDERSTAND FRENCH REPORT ON DECEMBER 22 MEETING
WITH TYUTYUNOV IS ALREADY AVAILABLE TO EMBASSY BONN
WHICH IS REPORTING IT. FRENCH HERE TELL US THAT
TYUTYUNOV WAS REALLY ASTONISHED AT RUMORS AND SAID

NOTHING MORE THAN FRENCH HAVE REPORTED. ONLY POINT NOT CONTAINED IN FRENCH INTRA-BERLIN MESSAGES ON REICHSBAHN (SEPTTEL) AND POSSIBLE CHECKPOINT ACTIONS CONCERNED BASC, WHERE TYUTYUNOV HAD HIGH PRAISE FOR EXCELLENT LEVEL COOPERATION EXISTING BETWEEN DEIFFERENCT ELEMENTS. FOR THE MOMENT THEN OUR PROPOSED DEMARCHE ON AUTOMOBILE DAMAGE CLAIMS (REF B) IS NO LONGER OF PRESSING URGENCY, BUT WE THINK IT SHOOULD BE MADE EVENTUALLY ON ITS OWN MERITS. MAKING THIS DEMARCHE IN ADVANCE OF THE US-GDR CLAIMS NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD RELIEVE THOSE NEGOTIATIONS FO BURDEN OF GDR VOUNTER-CLAIMS RE AUTOMOBILE CLAIMS. WE RECALL GDR DID INJECT ISSUE INTO FRENCH-GDR TALKS ON SAME SUBJECT LAST YEAR.

2. AT DEPUTY POLADS MEETING DECEMBER 22, DISCUSSION FO TWO POSSIBLE CONTINGENCIES (CONTROLS ON EAST BERLIN DIPLOMATS AND/OR CHECKPOINT CLOSURES) LED TO WIDESPREAD AGREEMENT. IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT THAT THE GDR SHOULD INSIST THAT DIPLOMATS OF ALLIED EMBASSIES IN EAST BERLIN USE PASSPORTS AND GDR VISAS TO TRANSIT TO WEST BERLIN THE IMMEDIATE ACTION REQUIRED WOULD BE TO INSTRUCT EMBASSIES NOT TO ACCEDE TO THIS GDR DEMAND. SINCE MANY OFFICERS AND DEPENDENTS HAVE GOOD REASONS TO GO TO WEST BERLIN AT ANY GIVEN TIME-- HOSPITAL APPOINTMENTS, SCHOOLS, TRAVEL VIA TEGEL, ETC. THIS FREEZING OF ALLIED PERSONNEL IN EAST BERLIN WOULD LEAD IMMEDIATELY TO PERSONAL HARDSHIPS. DEPUTY POLADS
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AGRRED THAT IN ANY SUCH CRISIS SITUATION, ALLIED ESTABLISHMENTS IN WEST BERLIN SHOULD BE PREPARED TO PROVIDE MILITARY DRIVERS FOR HARDSHIP CASES SUCH AS MEDICAL TREATMENT. THEY ALSO NTOED THAT THE LONG WAY THROUGH THE BERLINER RING TO DREWITZ WOULD STILL BE AVAILABLE TO PERSONNEL IN THE THREE EMBASSIES.

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 USBERLIN 3228

EXDIS - MILITARY ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

3. DEPUTY POLADS FOUND EQUALLY UNACCEPTABLE THE NOTION OF CLOSING THE FRIEDRICHSTRASSE CHECKPOINT BETWEEN MIDNIGHT AND 0600 HOURS. THEY BELIEVED IT FEASIBLE TO BAR THE SOVIETS FOR THE SAME PERIOD AS ONE IMMEDIATE COUNTERMEASURE. SOVIETS DO NOT USE THESE HOURS ORDINARILY TO TRAVEL TO AND FROM BASC, AND COULD REARRANGE THEIR DUTY SCHEDULES AT SPANDAU ETC. TO PRECLUDE TRIPS BETWEEN MIDNIGHT AND 0600. DEPUTY POLADS FELT THAT EVEN IF NO SOVIET CARS TURNED UP AT THE SECTOR CROSSING POINTS DURING THOSE HOURS, THE MERE PRESENCE OF MP'S FROM THE THREE POWERS PREPARED TO STOP THE SOVIET CARS WOULD ITSELF UNDERLINE ALLIED RESOLVE ON THE MATTER.

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4. ONE VERSION OF THE RUMORS CIRCULATING HERE HAS IT THAT THE GDR MAY CLOSE THE FRIEDRICHSTRASSE ONLY ON NEW YEAR'S EVE TO ALLOW ITS PERSONNEL TIME TO CELEBRATE. FRENCH AND BRITISH HAVE EACH PLANNED TO SEND FLAG TOURS INTO EAST BERLIN AT THAT TIME, ONE OF THEM SHORTLY BEFORE MIDNIGHT, ONE OF THEM AFTERWARDS. IN LIGHT OF THIS FRENCH AND BRITISH PLAN, U.S. IS NOT SCHEDULING A FLAG TOUR ON THE GROUNDS THAT TWO ALLIED TOURS ARE ENOUGH TO MAKE THE POINT. IT GDR SHOULD MAKE ABSOLUTELY CLEAR THAT THE CHECKPOINT IS BEING CLOSED ONLY ON NEW YEAR'S EVE ON A ONE TIME BASIS, WE HAVE SOME

DOUBT ABOUT WHETHER TESTING ACCESS IS DESIRABLE. WE WILL REPORT IMMEDIATELY IF THE GDR PROVIDES ANY SUCH INFORMATION AND DCSI/USCOB WILL HAVE AT THE READY GERMAN-SPEAKING AMERICANS TO ACCOMPANY FLAG TOURS WHERE THERE IS ANY POSSIBILITY THAT IMPORTANT EXCHANGES WITH EAST GERMAN PERSONNEL MIGHT TAKE PLACE.

5. WE AGREE WITH THE MEASURES WORKED OUT IN THE BONN GROUP ON DECEMBER 22 AND DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH 9 OF REF 1. WITH RESPECT TO THE SITUATION ENVISAGED IN PARA 9 B(2A), WE ARE SOMEWHAT CONCERNED THAT IF THE GDR CLOSED THE CHECKPOINT WITH AN ALLIED PATROL IN EAST BERLIN, THAT PATROL WOULD PRESUMABLY BE STUCK IN EAST BERLIN UNTIL THE CHECKPOINT WAS AGAIN OPENED. THE VEHICLE WOULD IN EFFECT BE TESTING ACCESS FROM THE EASTERN SIDE AND WOULD BE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE BY RADIO. THE EFFECT OF THE PARA 9 PROPOSAL WOULD THUS BE FOR ACCESS TO BE TESTED FROM BOTH DIRECTIONS.

6. MISSION WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS GRATITUDE TO THE EMBASSY
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FOR ITS EFFECTIVE ACTION IN BRINGING ABOUT BONN GROUP CONSIDERATION OF POSSIBLE GDR MEASURES OVER HOLIDAY PERIOD. WE TOO REGARD ANY GDR ACTION AS UNLIKELY. GIVEN LAST YEAR'S EVENTS IT WAS NOT SURPRISING THAT AT RECEPTIONS ON EVENING OF DECEMBER 22 VARIOUS SENAT OFFICIALS AND GERMAN JOURNALISTS WERE ASKING EACH OTHER WHETHER ANYONE EXPECTED TROUBLE DURING THE HOLIDAYS. CONSENSUS DRAWN FROM FOUR OR FIVE CONVERSATIONS INCLUDING SENATOR KORBER ON THE SENAT SIDE WAS THAT DIFFICULTIES ARE POSSIBLE BUT DEFINITELY NOT ANTICIPATED. LEADING CDU OPPOSITION LEADERS HAVE ALSO RAISED QUESTION OF POSSIBLE GDR SHENANIGANS AFTER JANUARY 1. THEY APPEAR MORE CONCERNED THAT ADDITIONAL STEPS WILL BE TAKEN TO MORE FULLY INTEGRATE EAST BERLIN INTO THE GDR. IT IS PERHAPS NOT SURPRISING THAT THEY TEND TO EXPRESS MORE CONCERN THAT SOMETHING MIGHT HAPPEN THAN DO OUR SENAT CONTACTS. WE MORE INCLINED TO SHARE SENAT VIEW. WE WOULD LIKE TO POINT OUT AGAIN, NEVERTHELESS, THAT IN THE EVENT OF UNACCEPTABLE RESTRICTIONS PLACED EITHER ON ALLIED ACCESS FORM WEST BERLIN OR ON THE SECTOR CROSSING PROCEDURES OF ALLIED PERSONNEL STATIONED IN EAST BERLIN, IT WOULD BE IMPERATIVE TO MAKE CLEAR AT THE OUTSET THAT THESE RESTRICTIONS ARE TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE AND CANNOT REMAIN IN FORCE.

7. USCOB CONCURS. GEORGE

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